

“Als reines Organ Gefühles”: Wagner’s Associative Orchestration and the Tristan Matrix

Julie Anne Nord
University of Western Ontario

julie.anne.nord@gmail.com

<http://uwo.academia.edu/JulieAnneNord/>

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TREATISE ON INSTRUMENTATION

Hector Berlioz
& Richard Strauss

Translated by
Theodore Front

Thus, Richard Wagner's scores are the alpha and omega of my additions to this work...

the phenomenal sound combinations which a Berlioz or Wagner drew from the orchestra must not be misused. These masters used them for giving expression to unheard-of, great, poetic ideas, feelings and pictures of nature...

Richard Strauss
Forward to Berlioz's *Treatise on Instrumentation*
Translated by Theodore Front

ORCHESTRATION/ TIMBRE

“secondary”

Roger Scruton (1999)

“merely colors”

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1753)

“Greek Chorus”

Roger Scruton (1999)

“sensual timbral phenomenon”

Egon Voss (1970)



“Whoever in judging my music divides the harmony from the instrumentation does me as much injustice as he who divides my music from my poetry, my song from words!”

Wagner to Theodor Uhlig May 1952

Translated in *My Life* (Cambridge UP, 2014)



THE ORCHESTRA indisputably possesses a *faculty of speech*, and the creations of modern Instrumental-music have disclosed it to us... we have plainly to denote this *Speaking-faculty of the Orchestra as the faculty of uttering the unspeakable...*

We have seen that the Orchestra is no mere compost of washy tone-ingredients, but consists of a *rich association of instruments— with unbounded power...*

the Tone-speech of an instrument ... *speaks out the very thing which Word-speech in itself can not speak out,— ... the Unspeakable.*

1. A III h 6

Tristan & Isolde

1 October 1857

Adagio (Compagnie Schwanbitter) *Frank*

The musical score is written on ten staves. The notation includes various notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The tempo is marked 'Adagio' and the name 'Frank' is written above the score. The score is a sketch, as indicated by the red text 'Orchesterskizze' at the bottom right.

Orchesterskizze

oder belehrt *heller*

Tambur und Sogun, die ich nannte, als trieben sie
 eine Leber
 , darin genau ich fühl' ein
 (heller)
 and.
 mit dem fallen schwebt ich vor.

Hob.
Hor.
Fag.
5/8

10
15
8
12

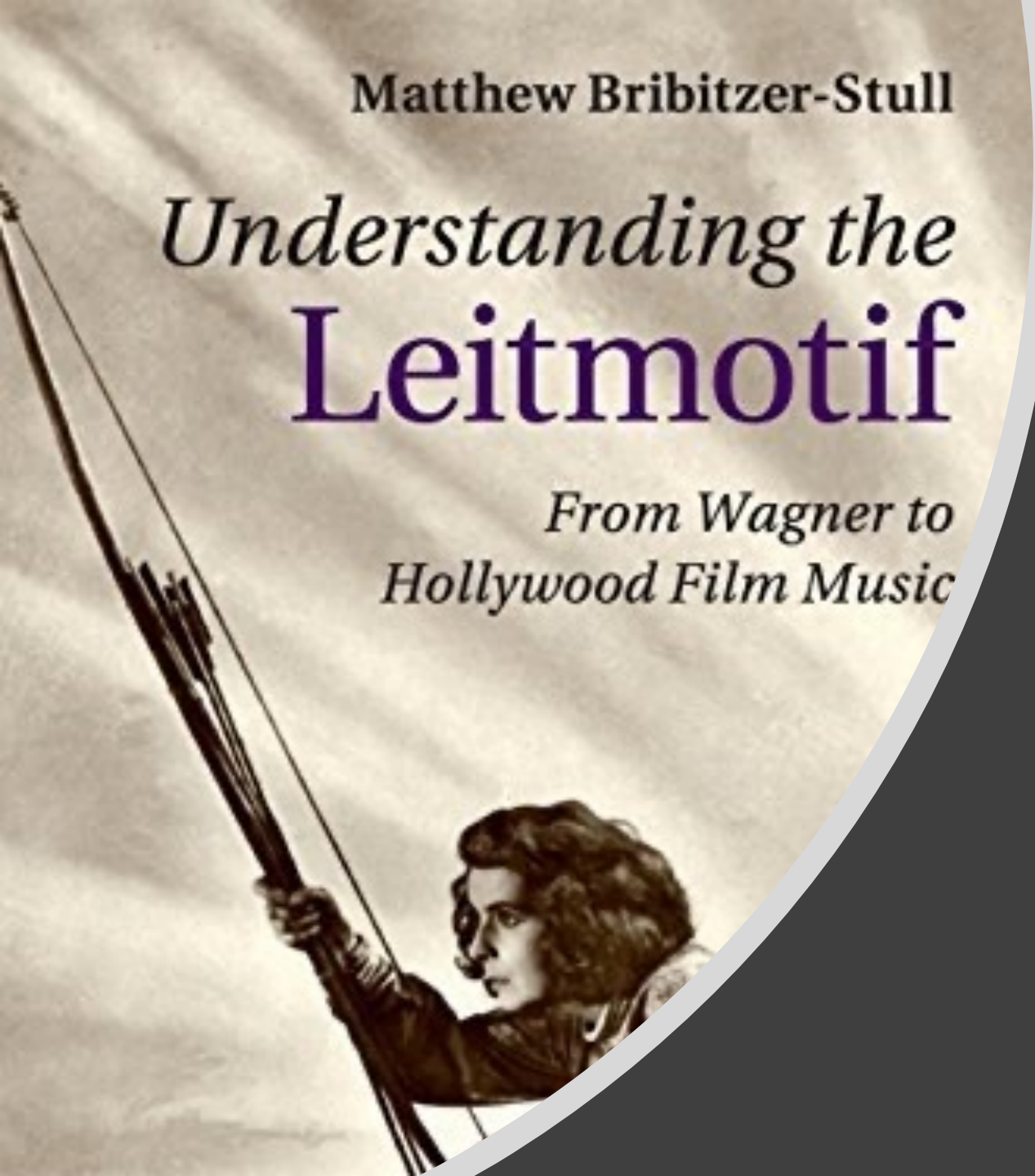
mein:

helt' ihn hite.
aus!
aus!

Ab.
in
Pa.
Pos.
Pos.
Pos.
in
in

starker Jesu's Abnichtslehren:
Schick' inang.
mit sangt. Du Do- d'raus!

Ab.
in
Pa.
Pos.
Pos.
Pos.
in
in



Matthew Bribitzer-Stull

Understanding the
Leitmotif

*From Wagner to
Hollywood Film Music*

“Associativity is, in short, the forging of a connection between two separate ideas such that one may evoke or recall the other.”

Matthew Bribitzer-Stull, *Understanding the Leitmotif*,
(Cambridge UP, 2015), 100.

Chapter Ten

... *wie ein rother Faden*: on the origins of
“leitmotif” as critical construct and
musical practice

THOMAS GREY

Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism

Edited by IAN BENT

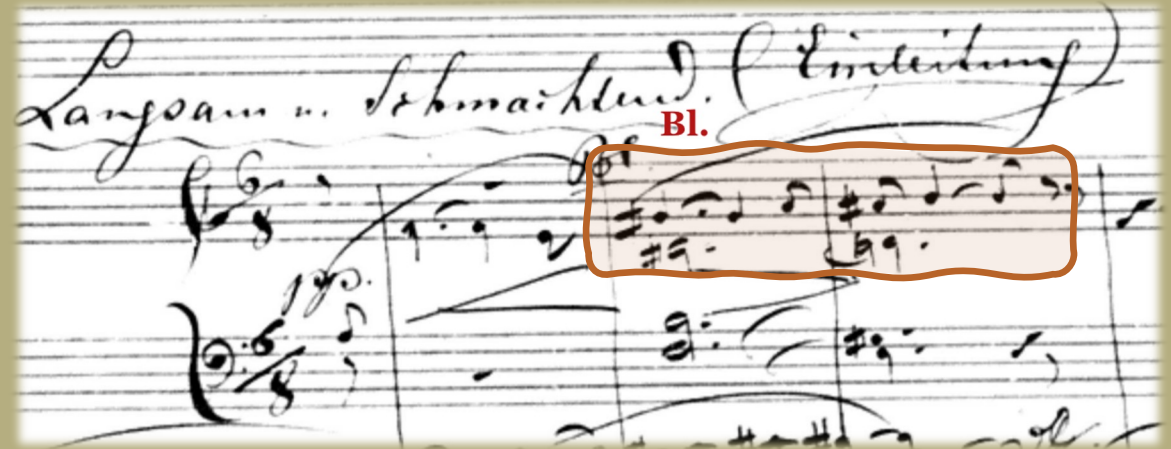
“associative hearing”
shuttles back and forth
freely between a variety of
contrasting and
interrelated ideas... as the
listener makes sense of
them in new contexts.”

Wagner's Associative Orchestration:

1. Diegetic
(Instrument as self)
2. Topical
3. Associative

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(Instrument as self)
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Labels for the Initial Leitmotifs in *Tristan*

| | Bottom Part | Top Part | Full Matrix |
|------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Porges (1868/1906) | Trauer, unsagbar wehmutsvolle Resignation | Eine wie von selbst hervorbrechende unstillbare sehnsucht | Liebes-Motiv |
| Wolzogen (1880) | Leidens-Motiv, Tristan zugeordnet | Sehnsuchts-Motiv, auf Isolde bezogen | ---- |
| Kobbé (1890) | Tristan | Isolde | Love and potion |
| Heintz (1891) | Trauer-Motiv des Tristan | Sehnsuchts-Motiv Isoldes | ---- |
| Neitzel (1893) | Tristan-Motiv | Liebeszauber-Motiv | ---- |
| Chop (1893) | ---- | ---- | Motiv des Liebesehrens |
| Lavignac (1898) (Eng. 1914) | Confession (of Love) | Desire | ---- |
| Pfohl (1904) | Entsagende Sehnsucht | Hoffende Sehnsucht/Zaubermotiv/Symbol des Liebestranks | Sehnsucht |
| Kufferath (1905?) | Tristan's suffering | Desire | ---- |
| Grunksy (1907) | ---- | Isolde: „Verräter! Ich trink'sie dir!“ | Isolde: „Mir erkoren, mir verloren“ |
| Burkhardt (1909) | ---- | ---- | Liebes-Motiv |
| Kühn (1914) | ---- | ---- | Tristan-Motiv |
| Windsperger (1920) | ---- | ---- | Liebestränkmotiv |
| Anheisser (1921) | Sehnsuchtsaffekt der Sexte; fehlt sie: Affekt des Entsagens, der in der Abkehr vom Leben endenden Verneinung | Hoffend, Bejahung des Lebens, höchst aktives Gefühl des Liebesbegehrens, des Triebes, durch alle Hemmungen hin zum Leben, zur Erfüllung zu gelangen | Affektischer Gegensatz: Entsagen/Begehren bzw. Abkehr von Leben/Drang hin zum Leben |
| Newman (1949) | Grief | Isolde's Magic | ---- |

Suffering

Longing

Love/Desire

Love Potion/
Magic

Tristan

Isolde

THE MUSICAL TOPIC



“Signs may be meaningful without having any clear unitary meaning.”

Raymond Monelle
The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military and Pastoral
(Indiana UP 2006, 29).

Instances of the Matrix in *Tristan*

| LEITMOTIF | Character | Text | Instrumentation | sketch? |
|---------------------------------|------------------|---|---------------------------------|--|
| full Matrix | Orchestra | ———— | vc: ob, kl, Eh, Fag | No |
| full Matrix | Orchestra | ———— | vc: ob, kl, Eh, Fag | No |
| full Matrix**extended | Orchestra | ———— | vc: ob, kl, Eh, Hn, Fag | No |
| full Matrix | Orchestra | ———— | br, vc: fl, ob, kl, Eh, Fag | No |
| full Matrix**extended | Orchestra | ———— | br, vc: ob, kl, Eh, Fag | No |
| full Matrix | Orchestra | ———— | Eh: ob | No |
| full Matrix | Orchestra | ———— | Bkl: KIA | No |
| no instances in | | | | |
| partial Matrix (bottom) | Isolde | Mir erkoren | —: voice | No |
| partial Matrix (bottom) | Isolde | mir verloren | —: voice | No |
| full Matrix | Isolde/Orchestra | hehr und heil, | voice: Eh | No |
| full Matrix | Isolde/Orchestra | kühn und feig | voice: Eh | No |
| partial Matrix (top) | Orchestra | ———— | —: Eh | No |
| partial Matrix (top) | Isolde/Orchestra | Frägst du nach Tristan, teure Frau? Dem Wunder aller Reiche (to Brangane) | voice: kl, hn/voice | No |
| partial Matrix (top) | Orchestra | B: Kennst du der Mutter Künste nicht? | —: ob | No |
| partial Matrix (top) | Orchestra | B: Wähnst du, die alles klug erwägt | —: kl | No |
| partial Matrix (top) | | B: ohne Rat in fremdes Land hätt sie mit dir mich entsandt? | —: ob | No |
| partial Matrix (top) | Orchestra | I: Der Mutter Rat gemahnt mich recht | —: Eh, Fag | No |
| partial Matrix (top) | Orchestra | I: willkommen preis ich ihre Kunst | —: Eh, Fag | No |
| partial Matrix (top) **extended | Orchestra | I: Rache für den Verrat | —: vln | No |
| partial Matrix (top) | Orchestra | B: So reihte sie die Mutter, die mächtgen Zaubetränke | —: fl, Eh | No |
| partial Matrix (top) | Orchestra | B: Für Weh und Wunden Balsam hier; | —: fl, Eh | No |
| partial Matrix (top) **extended | Orchestra | B: für böse Gifte Gegen Gift | —: Br | No |
| partial Matrix (top) | Orchestra | I: Kennst du der Mutter Künste nicht? | —: fl, Hn | No |
| partial Matrix (top) | Orchestra | I: Wähst du, die alles klug erwägt | —: fl, kl | No |
| partial Matrix (top) | Orchestra | I: ohne Rat in fremdes Land hätt sie mit dir mich entsandt?—: fl, ob | | No |
| partial Matrix (top) | Orchestra | Stage direction: Dann wirft sie die Schale fort. Beide, von B. Isolde wirft die Schale nicht fort, dieselbe entsinkt vielmehr ihrer allmählich sich öffnenden Hand. | —: ob | No |
| full Matrix | Orchestra | Stage direction: Schauer erfaßt, blicken sich mit höchster Aufregung, doch mit starrer Haltung, unverwandt in die Augen, in deren Ausdruck der Todestrotz bald der Liebesglut weicht. | vc: ob, kl, Eh, Fag | No |
| full Matrix**extended | Orchestra | Stage directions: Dann suchen sie sich wieder mit dem Blick,—senken ihn verwirrt, und heften ihn wieder mit steigender Sehnsucht aufeinander. | br, vc: ob, kl, Eh, Fag: fl ext | No |
| | | Just after the men sing: Heil! König Marke Heil! König | | YES, right before, but doesn't mention the |

*mit zunehmendem Ausdruck
con espressione sempre crescente*

pp

Tristan.

Und drauf I - sol - de, wie sie winkt, -
It bears I - sol - da, smil-ing, see

*sehr zart
dolcissimo*

p

p dolce

*ausdrucksvoll
espress.*

wie sie hold mir Süh - - - ne trinkt: -
how she par - don drinks - - - to me.

p

dim.

p

p

Siehst du sie? Siehst du sie noch nicht?
See'st her not? Canst not see her yet?

più p

pp

pp

più p

Sehr ruhig und nicht schleppend.

*mit zunehmendem Ausdruck
con espressione sempre crescente*

pp

T. Tristan.

Und drauf I - sol - de, wie sie winkt, -
It bears I - sol - da, smil-ing, see

*sehr zart
dolcissimo*

p

p dolce

T.

*ausdrucksvoll
espress.* wie sie hold mir Süh - - - ne trinkt: -
how she par - don drinks - - - to me.

p

dim.

p

p

T.

Siehst du sie? Siehst du sie noch nicht?
Seest her not? Canst not see her yet?

più p

pp

pp

più p

Sehr ruhig und nicht schleppend.



This page of a musical score contains the following elements:

- Woodwinds:** Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Fag.), and Contrabassoon (Kb.).
- Brass:** Horns (Hr.), Trumpets (Tr.), Trombones (Tbn.), and Tuba (Tb.).
- Strings:** Violins (Vl.), Violas (Vla.), Cellos (Vcl.), and Double Basses (Kb.).
- Percussion:** Timpani (Tm.).
- Voice:** A vocal line with German lyrics: "ertrin - ken, ver - sin - ken, - nu - ße, wusst - birh -".
- Dynamic Markings:** The score includes various dynamic markings such as *dim.* (diminuendo), *piu p* (pianissimo), and *pp* (pianissimo).
- Tempo/Character:** The tempo is marked *M.F.* (Moderato-Forte).

M.F.

Fl. *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Oboe *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Cl. *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Bs. *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Hr. *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Tr. *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Tbn. *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Tuba *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Euph. *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Vcl. I *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Vcl. II *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Vla. *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Vcl. *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Cb. *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Harp. *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Vcl. *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Cl. *dim.* *p* *piu p* *pp*

Voice: ertrin - ken, ver - sin - ken, - nu - ße, wusst - birh



Wagner's Associative Orchestration:

1. Diegetic
(Instrument as self)
2. Topically
3. Associative
Orchestration

39

rallent.

Part. II 15-14.

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